

BOB JONES UNIVERSITY

CONCERT, OPERA & DRAMA SERIES

PRESENTS

COMMENCEMENT CONCERT

by the
University Symphony Orchestra
Combined Choirs and Soloists

Dwight Gustafson, Conductor

"Dance of the Apprentices and Procession of the Mastersingers" from
Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg . . . . Richard Wagner
(1813-1883)

Since the completion of his opera *Tannhäuser* in 1845, Wagner had toyed with the idea of writing an opera on the famous poet-composers who dominated songwriting in Germany from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. These mastersingers had formed guilds in order to preserve and transmit their heritage of song. Act III of *Die Meistersinger* takes place in a field outside town on Midsummer's Day. All the townspeople are gathering for this festive celebration, which will culminate in the famous singing contest. On the river a boat arrives, bringing girls from a nearby town. The apprentices and journeymen rush to the boat to help them ashore. They then pair off to dance to Wagner's simple, rustic tune—the "only waltz Wagner ever wrote." The dance soon gives way to the procession of the

mastersingers—the judges for the coming contest. The procession begins with the theme of the mastersingers, and Wagner also uses two authentic Meistersinger tunes, which he discovered in doing research for the opera. Near the end of the procession, a triangle signals the combining of all three melodies in a display of typical Wagnerian polyphony.

Concerto in D Major
for Violin and Orchestra . . . . Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Allegro moderato

Joanna Mulfinger, soloist

Although Tchaikovsky's violin concerto was completed in 1878, it did not receive its first performance until three years later. The reason for the postponement lay in the immense technical difficulties for the soloist. Tchaikovsky had originally dedicated the work to the famous Hungarian violinist, Leopold Auer, who not only refused to perform it, but also discouraged other violinists from the attempt. Finally a young virtuoso, Adolf Brodsky, gave the work its first performance in Vienna in December of 1881. Even Auer eventually reversed his opinion and played the "unplayable" many times, including a performance at a memorial concert after Tchaikovsky's death.

Indeed, this concerto is still considered to be a technical tour-de-force, described often as "bristling with thorny problems." It is considered by some to be the most Russian of Tchaikovsky's concertos despite its initial inspiration being Spanish and despite its being unquestionably influenced by gypsy violin music. The first movement opens with a simple, beautiful melody in the violins (which never reappears). After this statement, the slow evolution into the main theme, presented then fully by the unaccompanied soloist, has been described as "Tchaikovsky magic."

INTERMISSION*

Symphony No. 5 in D Major,
"Reformation" . . . . Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Choral – Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott!
Andante con moto – Allegro vivace – Allegro maestoso

Mendelssohn composed this symphony for a possible performance in connection with celebrations to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, that doctrinal and foundational statement of the Lutheran Church. However, because of the political climate in Europe in 1830, the symphony did not receive its premiere until 1832.

To characterize the Protestant Reformation, Mendelssohn incorporated two musical themes in the symphony, one in the first movement and one in the last.

For the first movement he used the Dresden Amen motive, a rising scale of four notes. For the last movement he turned for inspiration to the battle cry of the Reformation, the Lutheran chorale "A Mighty Fortress." This theme is first heard in the solo flute; it then gradually increases in volume and instrumentation and then in tempo. Mendelssohn subsequently treats the chorale theme with variations and a fugue. It returns as a grandiose chorale before the rousing coda.

"Hallelujah" from
Christ on the Mount of Olives .... Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Hallelujah unto God's Almighty Son.
Praise the Lord, ye bright angelic choirs,
in holy songs of joy.
Man proclaim His grace and glory.
Hallelujah unto God's Almighty Son.
Praise the Lord in holy songs of joy.

Beethoven's only oratorio, *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, was his first dramatic vocal work. It premiered with his second symphony and third piano concerto on a program which also included his first symphony. Several other works on the program had to be deleted for lack of time!

The oratorio text examines the theme of suffering: Christ's agony in the garden, the despair of the disciples at Christ's arrest, and Christ's confrontation with Peter. It concludes majestically with a chorus of angels, often referred to as "Beethoven's Hallelujah Chorus." The combination of the slow, majestic, dotted rhythms of the opening with its succeeding faster fugue suggests a giant French overture in form. Full, massive chords return to close this paean of praise to the Almighty Deliverer.

"He Watching Over Israel," from *Elijah* .... Felix Mendelssohn

It seems appropriate that Felix Mendelssohn, the man who revived the choral masterpieces of J. S. Bach and who conducted many of Handel's oratorios for English and German audiences, should himself compose two of the finest oratorios of the nineteenth century—*St. Paul* and *Elijah*. Mendelssohn's interest in Scripture stemmed from deep theological convictions and his own personal faith in God's Word. He began considering a subject for a second oratorio soon after the success of his *St. Paul* in 1836. It was not until 1845, when the Birmingham Festival of Music in England commissioned Mendelssohn to write a choral work, that he returned to the idea of *Elijah*. Musically and dramatically, *Elijah* contains some of the most exciting scenes and choruses in oratorio literature. It also includes psychological portrayals, especially in the scene in which Elijah wished to die. The chorus, "He Watching Over Israel," comes from this scene. Elijah, after expressing his wish to die, has fallen asleep under the juniper tree. The lyrical, peaceful qualities of this chorus have engendered the comment that it is the "perfection of dream music."

Finlandia .... Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

In the late nineteenth century, Finland was in a struggle with Russia for cultural and political survival as a people and as a nation. Sibelius was swept into this tide of awakening nationalism and became recognized as one of its champions. Thus, in 1899 he was asked to provide the prelude and background music for six historical tableaux, which were to form the highlight of the Press Pension Celebrations (ostensibly a money-raising event, but actually a demonstration of Finnish patriotism). The tableaux staged various scenes from Finland's troubled history. The finale, originally entitled "Finland Awakes," survived as a separate piece, the familiar tone poem we now know as "Finlandia."

Three Psalms for Chorus,
Organ, and Orchestra .... Dwight Gustafson
(b. 1930)

Text adapted from the King James Version

Psalm 100—O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness, and come before His presence with a song. Know ye that the Lord, He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

Psalm 23—The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, tho' I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 150—Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His pow'r. Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let ev'ry thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

These three psalms form an arch in their textual and musical moods, tempos, and melodic material. Psalm 100, "O Be Joyful in the Lord," opens brightly in a paean of praise. Its pandiatonic lyricism, modal melodies, and use of added tones combine in a fresh exuberance, united by orchestral interludes based on the old Genevan Psalter tune "Old Hundredth" (Doxology).

The central psalm, the twenty-third, changes the mood, painting a pastoral scene. The opening passage for unison sopranos declares the intimacy and the surety of

"The Lord Is My Shepherd." The orchestral interludes here give reminiscences of the familiar tune "Crimond" from the Scottish Psalter.

Psalm 150 returns to a jubilant spirit and tempo, with an introductory fanfare to the acclamation, "Praise Ye the Lord." Quartal harmonies add their piquancy to this psalm of praise, which once more reinforces the tune "Old Hundredth" in its accompaniment.

Program notes by Karen Wilson

ORCHESTRA

First Violin: Andrea Smith (concertmistress), Brandon Page, Alyssa Pritchard, Jonathan Albright, Dianne Pinner, Stephen Schaub, Kristin Coleman, Matthew Umlauf, Katie Short, Benjamin Enyart ***Second Violin***: Sarah Roberts*, Darby Innerst, Rachelle Emory, Rebecca Grove, Hannah Gillis, Heidi Laird, Betsy Myers, Jessica Johnson, Keren Burdick, Jonathan Burdick, J.D. Cancino ***Viola***: Brian Evans*, Andrew Miller, Monica Wall, Susan Quindag, Sandy Harris, Lydia Lowe, Sharalynn Hicks ***Cello***: Allen Probus*, Russell Davis, Christine Lee, Rachel Ritschard, Henry Sauter, Lynsey Haught, Mollie Campbell, Michelle Spence ***Double Bass***: Jay-Martin Pinner*, Reginald Lamb, Don Barrett, Andrew Fields ***Flute***: Jennifer Wynveen*, Sarah Eubank ***Piccolo***: Katie Matzo ***Oboe***: Dawn Barrier*, Mary AllyeB Purtle ***Clarinet***: Heather Monk*, Cyndee Corley ***Bassoon***: Alex Fields*, Bob Chest ***Contra-alto Clarinet***: Arnold Alier ***Horn***: Rory McDaniel*, Sara Vandermolen, Rebecca Mason, Benjamin Ebner ***Trumpet***: Daniel Birnschein*, Candace Horton, James Watson ***Trombone***: Paul Overly*, Bryan McNally, Todd Townsend ***Tuba***: John Cofer ***Timpani:*** Jay Bopp ***Percussion***: Rob Schoolfield*, Michael Moore ***Organ***: Ed Dunbar ***Harp***: Emily Zane*, Elisabeth Wagner

*denotes principal

COMBINED CHOIRS

Soprano: Rebekah Abbott, Elizabeth Baker, Suzanne Bakri, Angela Berg, Sarah Bianchi, Dawn Braun, Jennifer Butler, Megan Clark, Sarah Clendinen, Ruth Crumley, Lisa Dukeshier, Melissa Frey, Martha Guerrant, Jeanine Hearn, Christy Jones, Paula Lavender, Kristen Lawton, Loraena Lindblad, Michelle Mandeville, Bonnie Ruth Marshall, Abigail Minnick, Bethany Mosely, Joanie Pegram, Charisse Rodman, Tara Rodman, Josslyn Scherbenske, Emily Shaw, Amy Stevens, Laurie VanScoy, Rachel White, Karin Wiley ***Alto***: Leisha Alford, Kathryn Bagnall, Cherith Barkman, Sheralyn Berg, Holly Bryant, Lenora Burnette, Sarah Crosby, James Dixon, Beth Ann Fetterolf, Greta Forman, Tara Hamilton, Debra Harris, Molly Ijames, Heather Kauffman, Jodi Major, Krista Martin, Kasey McNaughten, Nicole Mercado, Eva Motter, Lydia Potts, Mary Rodgers, Ellen Saunders, Rachael Shore, Maria Snyder, Elisabeth Strope, Jennifer Tirado, Ruth Umlauf, Ellen Weaver ***Tenor***: Scott Aniol, Daniel Arnold, Nathan Arnold, Daniel Banks, James Barnard, Andrew Bolden, Michael Bryson, Jacob Erickson, Silas Garinger, Anthony Hayden, Garth Henson, Mark Jeffords, Samuel Lavender, Joshua Louk,

Matthew Mackey, Edward Murphy, Scott Norris, Joel Potter, Joshua Rohrer, Ryan Salomon, Jason Stefoff, Matthew Taylor, Aaron Whisler, James Winnberg, Eliezer Yanson ***Bass***: Steven Armstrong, Scott Ashby, Gary Balius, Daniel Bannister, Michael Bryson, Stephen Dawley, Jeremiah Dierking, Joel DuBois, Jonathan Fry, David Gore, Brian Graham, William Gray, Jonathan Hamilton, Josh Hummel, Kevin Inafuku, Darren Jones, Alexander Kruchkov, David Matthews, Jeremy McMorris, Brandon Moody, Eric Newton, Ryan Pennington, Joshua Plonk, Steven Roderer, Theodore Roderer, Jeremy Stayton, Brian Swillum, Jeremy Van Delinder

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

The University Symphony looks forward to a busy and exciting 1999-2000 season with an October concert; a one-week tour to churches and Christian schools in late October; a Thanksgiving Hymn Festival with soloists and congregational participation; Verdi's *Aida* in March; and an all-patriotic concert during commencement week in 2000. The University Chorale and the three Vesper choirs joining forces for this concert will be featured in concert, on Vesper programs, and in the annual *Living Gallery* presentation next year.

Joanna Mulfinger is the eleventh of eleven children of George and Joan Mulfinger. The Mulfinger family has had an important role in University life for many years. George, a respected BJU physics professor and cellist, passed away in 1987. Joan, a violinist, is the senior member of the BJU String Department. Joanna has won several regional competitions and has regularly served as concertmistress of the University Symphony. She receives her B.Mus. in violin performance this year and plans to pursue graduate studies at Peabody Conservatory.

Directors of the individual choirs are
Warren Cook, Gail Gingery, William McCauley, and David Parker.

Rehearsal accompanist is Olivia Vaal.

FOUNDER'S MEMORIAL AMPHITORIUM
May 7, 1999
8 P.M.

* Chimes will sound and lobby lights will flash three minutes before the end of intermission. After the houselights are dimmed following intermission, no one will be readmitted to his seat.

Cameras and recording equipment are not permitted in the Amphitorium during any performance. We request that signal watches be turned off during the program.

Tickets for this production have been sponsored by Genesis Marketing.

Cassette recordings of this performance may be ordered through the Custom Order Department at the University Campus Store.